MARVEL

#4

RYAN CAMPBELL
RUGGIERO SALTARES

A CLONE CONSPIRACY TIE-IN

THE PROWLER

Hobie Brown was a brilliant inventor trapped in an unfulfilling job. Inspired to make something more of himself, he became...

THE PROWLER

AFTER BEING KILLED BY THE NEW, FEMALE ELECTRO WHILE DOING RECONNAISSANCE FOR SPIDER-MAN, HOBIE BROWN, A.K.A. THE PROWLER, WAS CLONED AND REANIMATED BY THE JACKAL... BUT RESURRECTION CAME AT A PRICE: A DAILY DOSE OF MEDICATION THAT HOBIE NOW HAS TO TAKE TO PREVENT HIS BODY FROM DECAYING. IN EXCHANGE FOR THE MEDICATION, THE PROWLER HAS TO WORK FOR THE JACKAL, KEEPING AN EYE ON OTHER SUPERHUMANS WHO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE, MANY OF THEM VIOLENT AND DANGEROUS.

RECENTLY, SOMEONE STARTED LAUNCHING CYBERATTACKS ON NEW U'S MAINFRAME, AND JACKAL DISPATCHED PROWLER TO DISCOVER WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INTRUSION AND PUT A STOP TO IT.

HOBIE'S OLD ALLY JULIA CARPENTER, THE SECOND MADAME WEB, WAS THE HACKER, AND WHEN HE LOCATED AND DISABLED HER BASE OF OPERATIONS ON ALCATRAZ ISLAND, THE TWO CAME TO BLOWS. BUT BEFORE LONG, HOBIE'S TIME AWAY FROM NEW U AND HIS MEDICATION TOOK THEIR TOLL AND HIS BODY BEGAN TO DECAY, ALLOWING JULIA TO FLEE.

TRACKING HOBIE TO ALCATRAZ, ELECTRO AMBUSHED HIM, BUT THANKS TO SOME QUICK THINKING (AND AN ASSIST FROM JULIA) THE TWO WERE ABLE TO KNOCK HER OUT COLD. NOW, THEY HAVE TO FIND A WAY OFF THE ISLAND AND BACK TO NEW U BEFORE HOBIE'S BODY DECAYS FULLY...

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WHAT'S EVEN GOING ON?
SNAP
ALL OF YOU. KILL HIM.
IS THERE NO ONE I CAN TRUST ANYMORE?
AND THEN YOU BRING HIM BACK, YES?
UNDER YOUR CONTROL?
YOU PICK A SIDE. BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S THE RIGHT SIDE?
NO.
I ALREADY HAVE...SOMEONE WHO CAN TAKE HIS PLACE.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

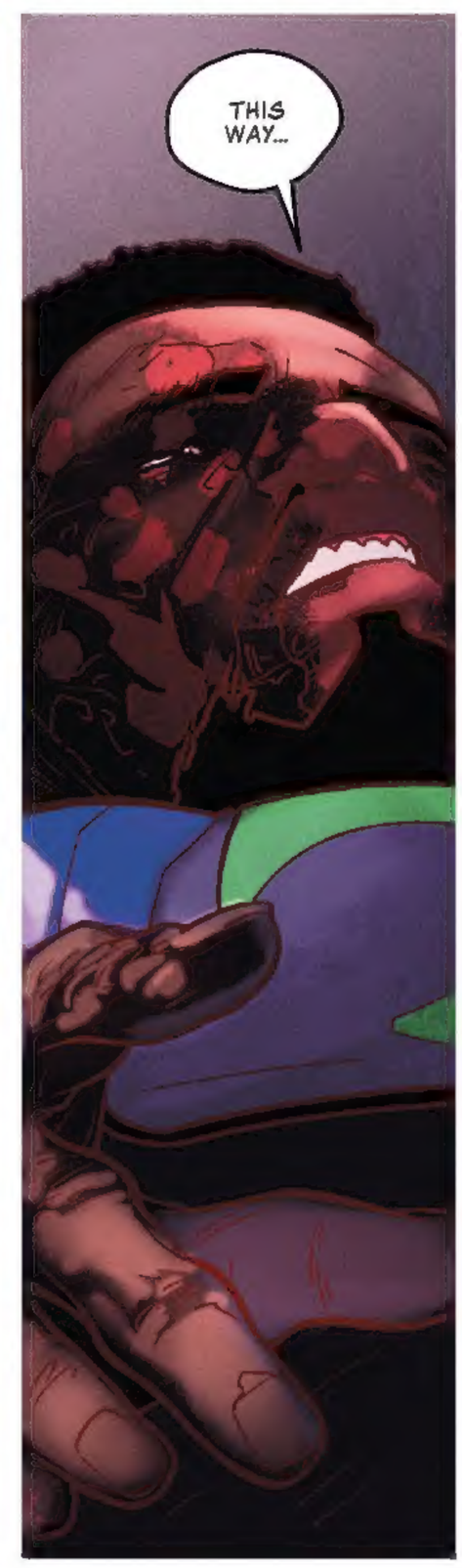
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS A GOOD PERSON.
WHATEVER THAT MEANS.
I'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO HELP PEOPLE IN NEED.
WHAT ABOUT ME? NEED A HAND?
PROWLER! ADMIT IT. YOU'VE BEEN WITH ME THE WHOLE TIME, HAVEN'T YA?
NOPE. TEAM JACKAL. BUT ANYONE TRIES TO KILL SPIDER-MAN?
BUT I ATTACH MYSELF TO PEOPLE OR CAUSES, THINKING I NEED THEM TO HELP ME HELP PEOPLE.
THEY'RE CLEARLY THE BAD GUYS.
I TRUST THEM.
I LOSE MYSELF IN THEM.

BUT PEOPLE AND CAUSES LET ME DOWN.
I'M ABANDONED.
SKREEEEEEEEE
ARRGHH!
REEEEEEEEEE
EVERYTHING GOES TO HELL.
HOBIE! NO!
SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
AND I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT TO PICK UP THE PIECES.

TWO HOURS AGO...

THIS IS IT?

I REALLY THOUGHT SECURITY AT *NEW U* WOULD BE A LITTLE MORE INTENSE THAN *THIS.*



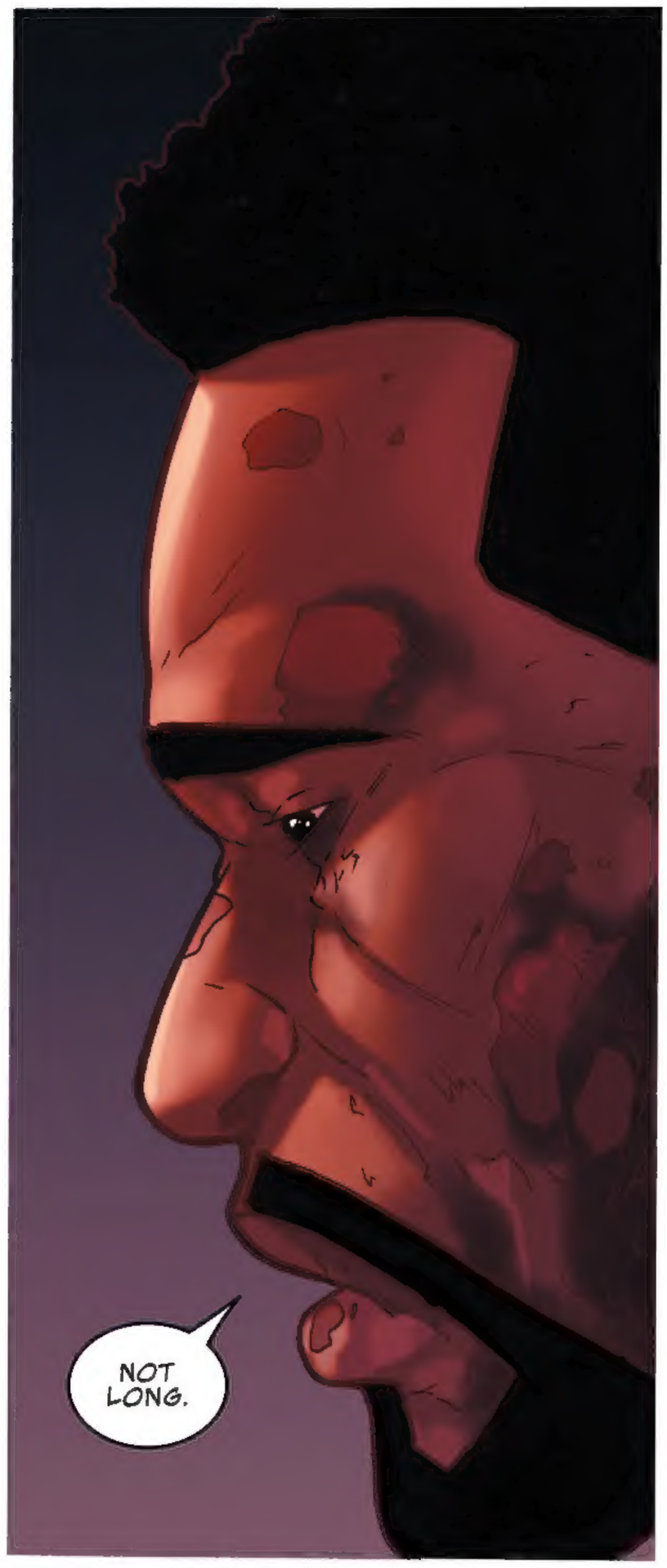
IS THIS WHERE YOU'VE BEEN LIVING? IT'S LIKE A PRISON CELL, HOBIE.

ARE THESE THE PILLS? THESE ARE THE ONLY ONES I SEE IN HERE. HOW MANY DO YOU NEED?
UNNN...

COME ON, HOBIE. YOU'VE GOT TO SIT UP.
THIS WILL ALL BE OVER SOON.

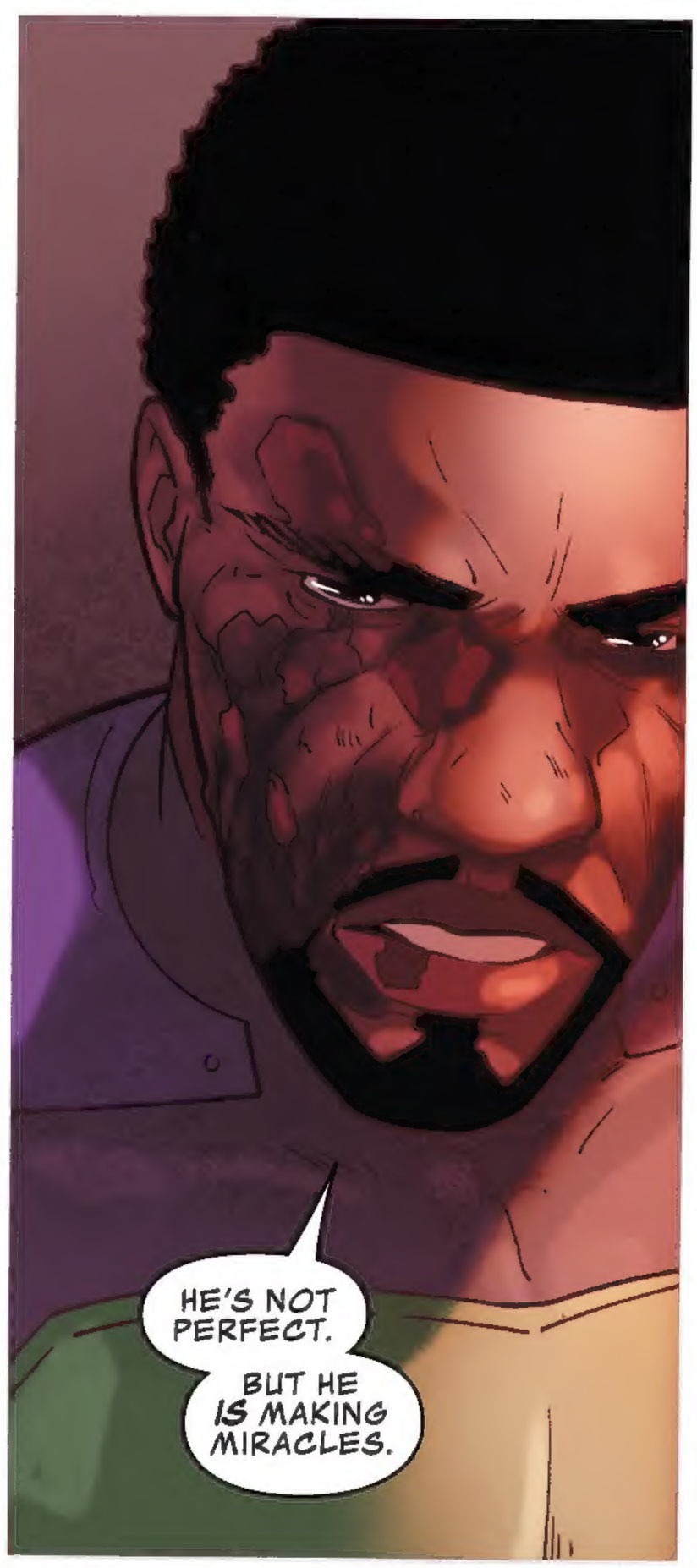
LET'S FIX YOU RIGHT UP.

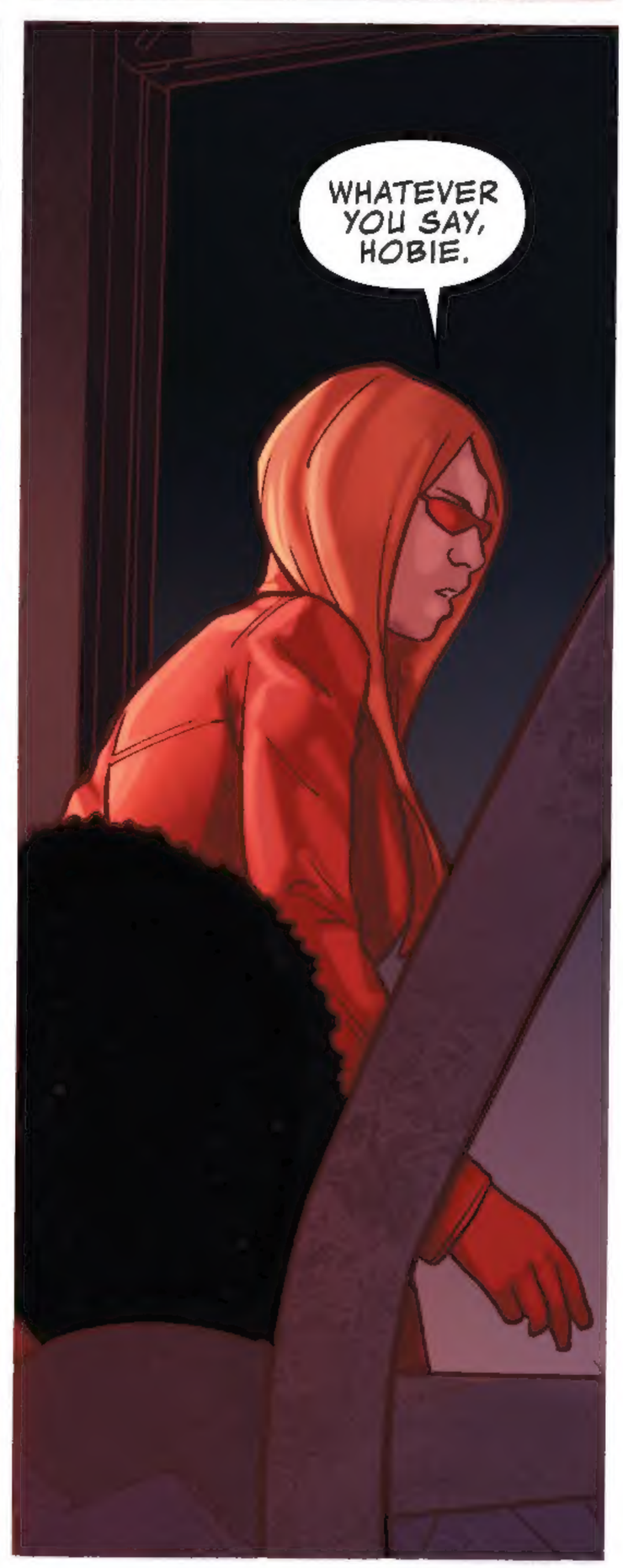
SO HOW LONG SHOULD IT TAKE FOR THE PILL TO START TAKING EFFECT?
NNG...


NOT LONG.

GOOD.
THEN YOU CAN RECUPERATE HERE WHILE I TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
WHAT?

HOBIE, I'M INSIDE NEW U HEADQUARTERS, WHICH APPEARS TO BE COMPLETELY DESERTED. I'D BE INSANE NOT TO SEE WHAT I CAN FIND AROUND HERE.
I KNOW YOU THINK EVERYTHING'S PEACHY KEEN IN THIS PLACE, BUT I HAVE A HARD TIME TRUSTING THAT THE JACKAL IS SUDDENLY ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS.


HE'S NOT PERFECT.
BUT HE IS MAKING MIRACLES.


WHATEVER YOU SAY, HOBIE.

JULIA, NO! COME BACK!

STOP!
URGHH!!
DAMMIT!

COME BACK!!!

THAT VOICE...
NO.
IS THAT REALLY YOU?

WHERE ARE YOU?
HOW DO I GET THERE?

I CAN SEE NOW. I'M COMING.
MIGHT TAKE ME A LITTLE WHILE.

THANKS FOR THE SHORTCUT. I'LL BE THERE SOON.

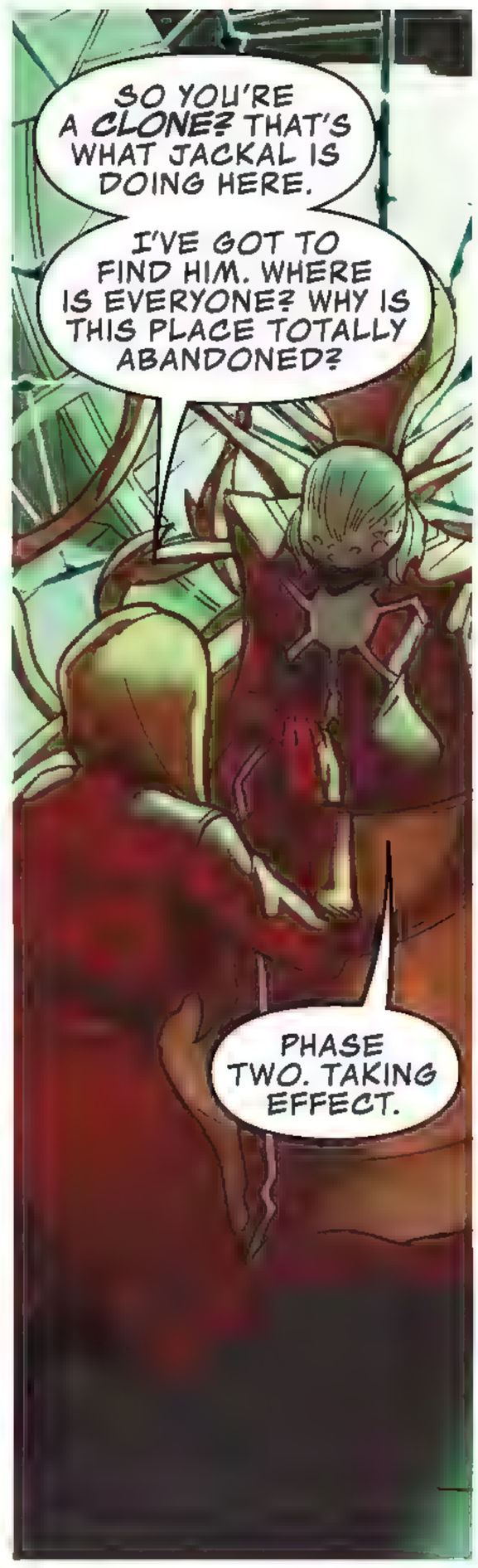
JUST THROUGH HERE?
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.

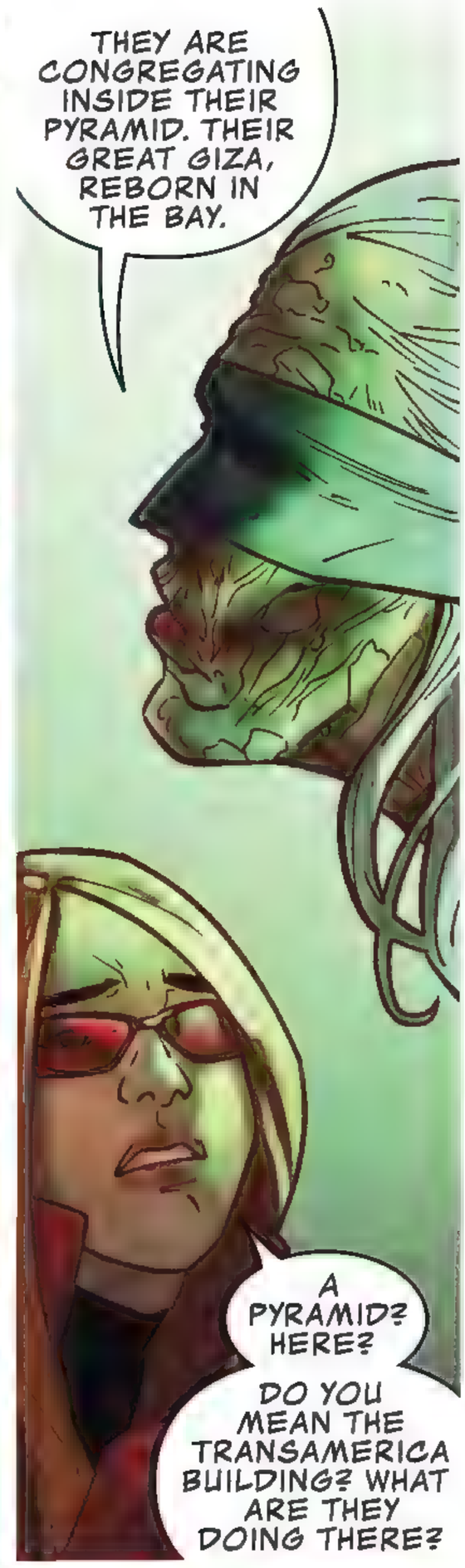
MADAME WEB.
CASSANDRA.
HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE? I SAW YOU DIE.

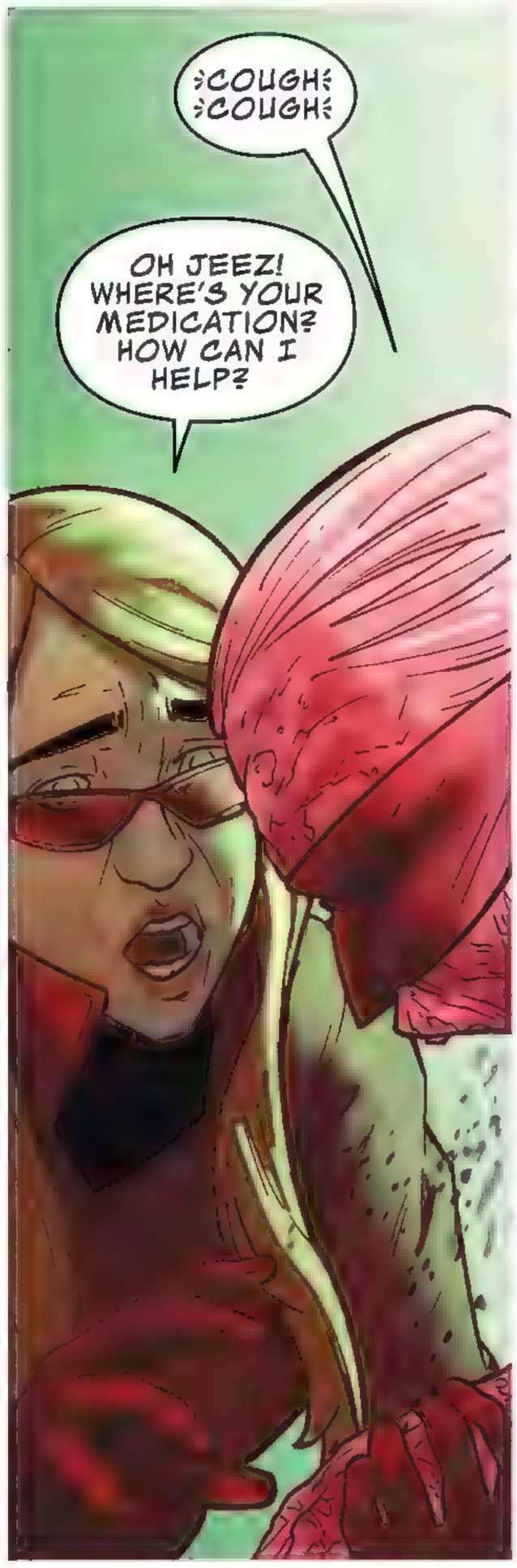
AND YOU WILL AGAIN.

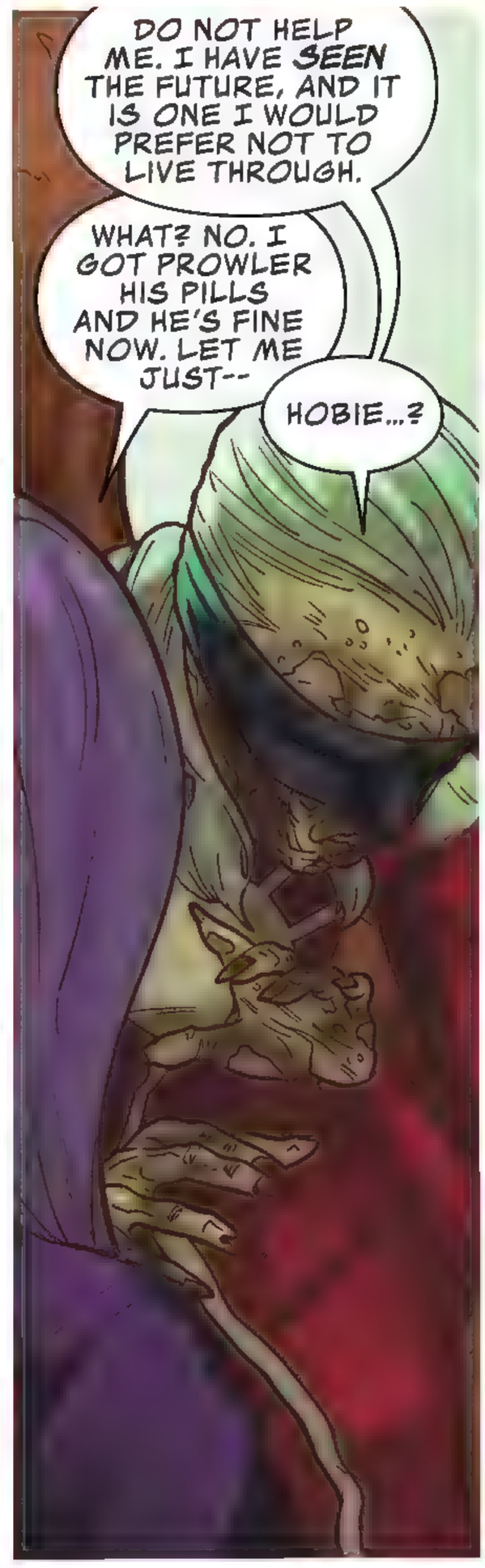
OH, MY GOD. WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU?
DUST IN THE WIND. IT'S ENDING AGAIN FOR ME.

LEAVE ME. I AM TOO COMPLICATED TO MOVE.
THEY LEFT ME MEDICATION TO STABILIZE THIS IMPERFECT FORM, BUT I REFUSE TO TAKE IT.


SO YOU'RE A CLONE? THAT'S WHAT JACKAL IS DOING HERE.
I'VE GOT TO FIND HIM. WHERE IS EVERYONE? WHY IS THIS PLACE TOTALLY ABANDONED?
PHASE TWO. TAKING EFFECT.

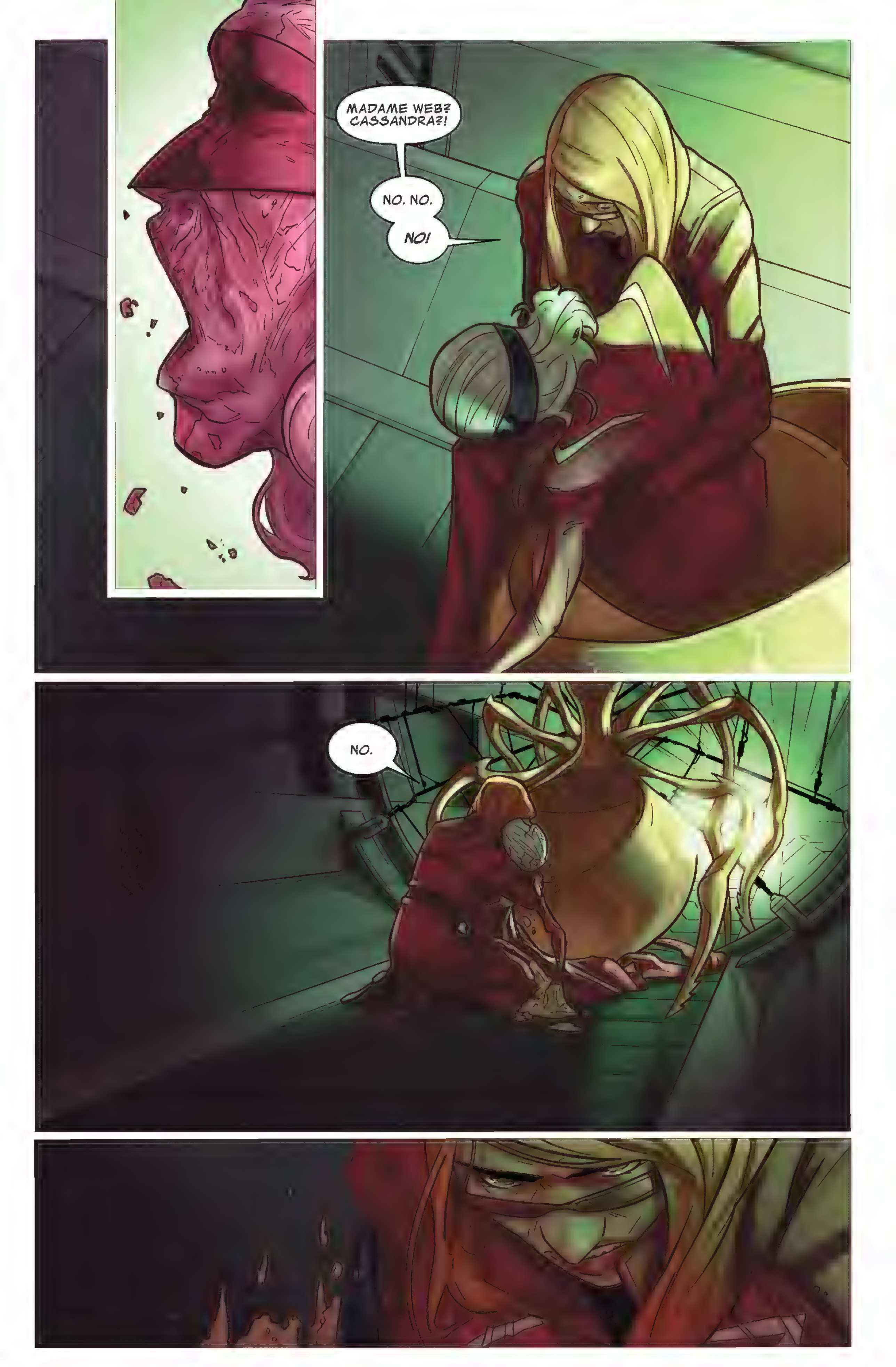

THEY ARE CONGREGATING INSIDE THEIR PYRAMID. THEIR GREAT GIZA, REBORN IN THE BAY.
A PYRAMID? HERE?
DO YOU MEAN THE TRANSAMERICA BUILDING? WHAT ARE THEY DOING THERE?


COUGH COUGH
OH JEEZ! WHERE'S YOUR MEDICATION? HOW CAN I HELP?

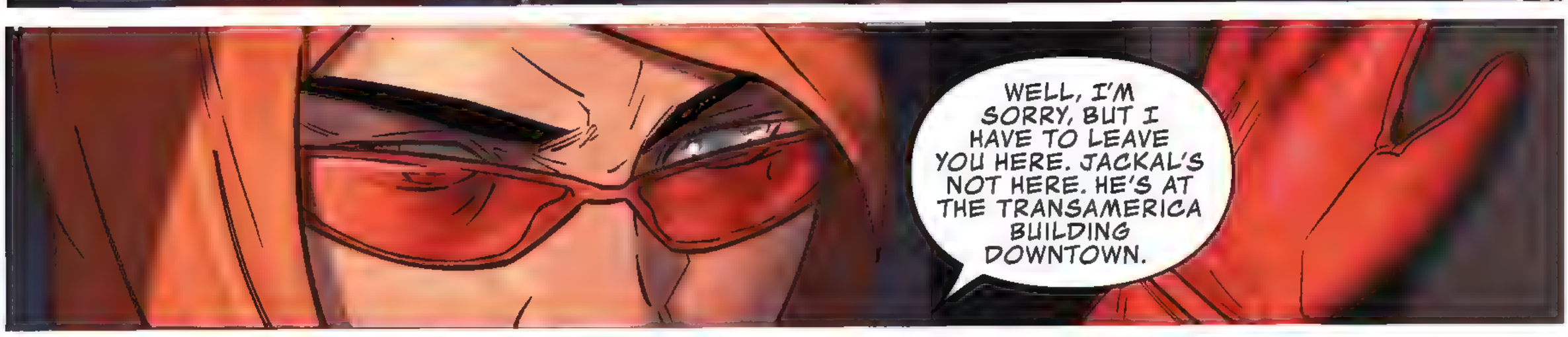

DO NOT HELP ME. I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE, AND IT IS ONE I WOULD PREFER NOT TO LIVE THROUGH.
WHAT? NO. I GOT PROWLER HIS PILLS AND HE'S FINE NOW. LET ME JUST--
HOBIE...?

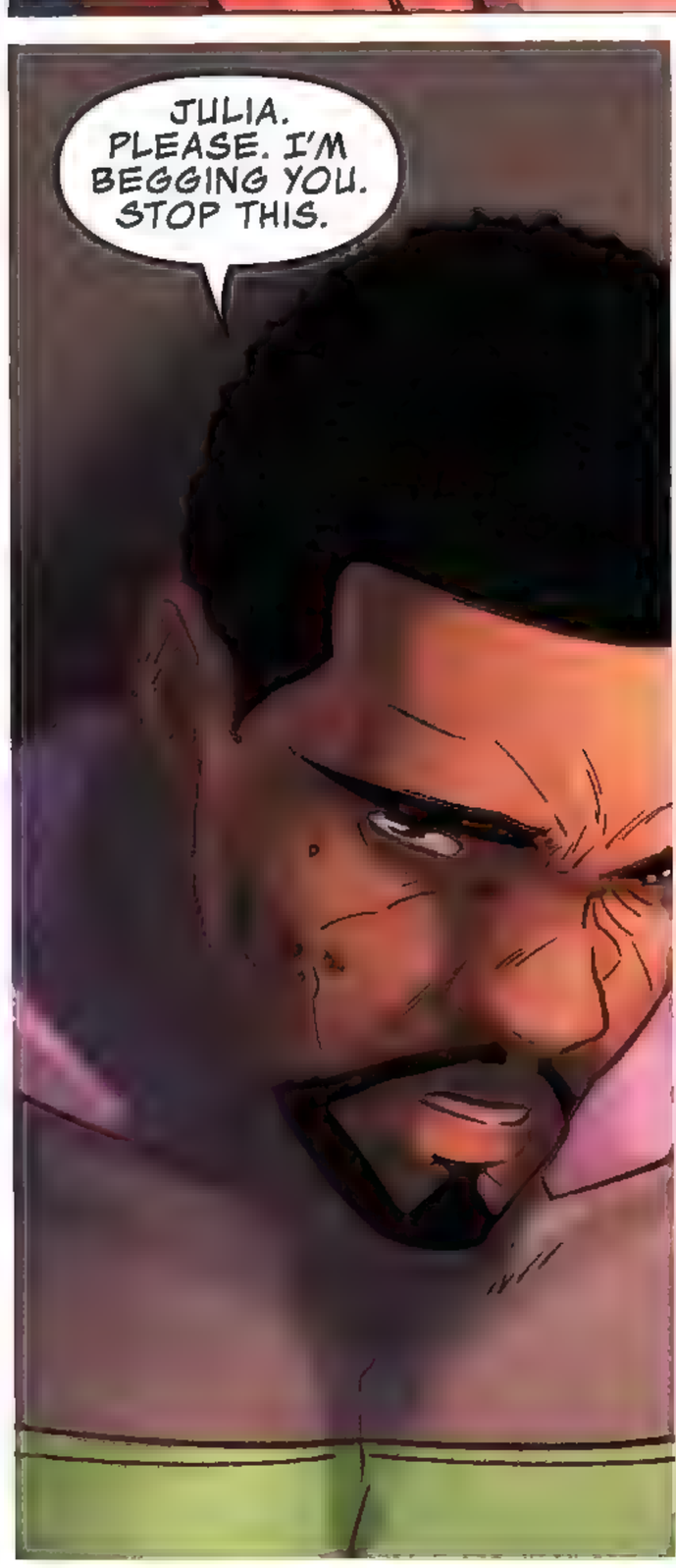
SAVE HOBIE.

I DID. I ALREADY DID.
NOT HIM...

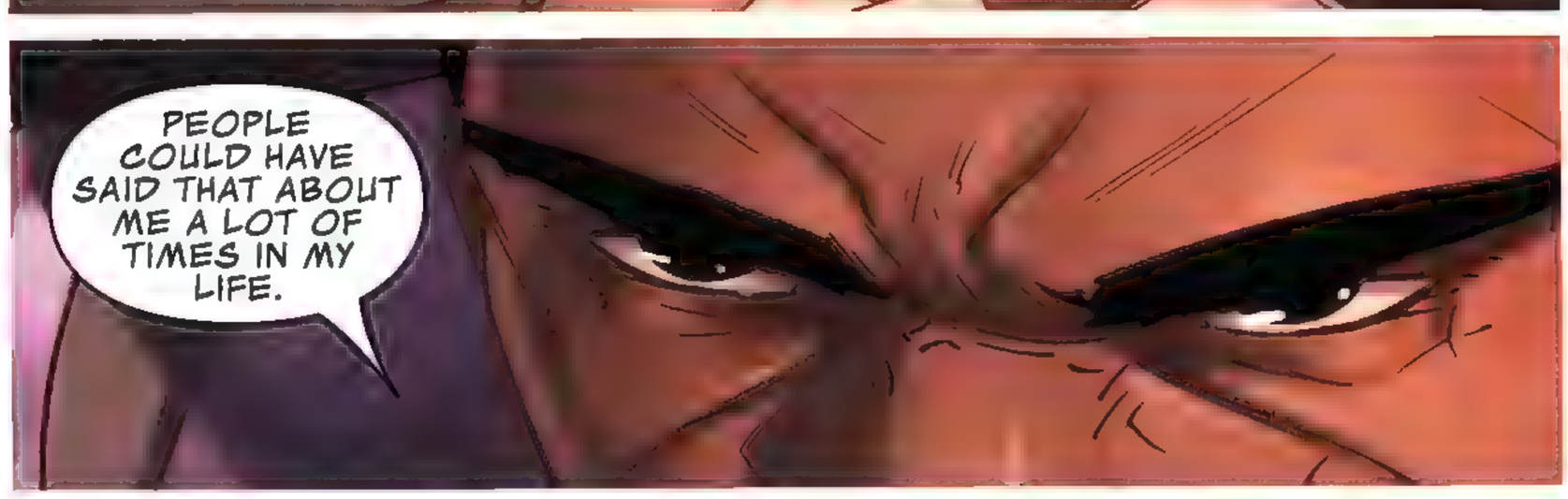

MADAME WEB? CASSANDRA?!
NO. NO.
NO!
NO.

HOBIE, ARE YOU OKAY?
GETTING THERE.


WELL, I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVE TO LEAVE YOU HERE. JACKAL'S NOT HERE. HE'S AT THE TRANSAMERICA BUILDING DOWNTOWN.


JULIA. PLEASE. I'M BEGGING YOU. STOP THIS.

THE JACKAL IS A BAD PERSON, HOBIE.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN WHAT HE'S DOING IS BAD.
HE LOST THAT BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT A LONG TIME AGO.


PEOPLE COULD HAVE SAID THAT ABOUT ME A LOT OF TIMES IN MY LIFE.

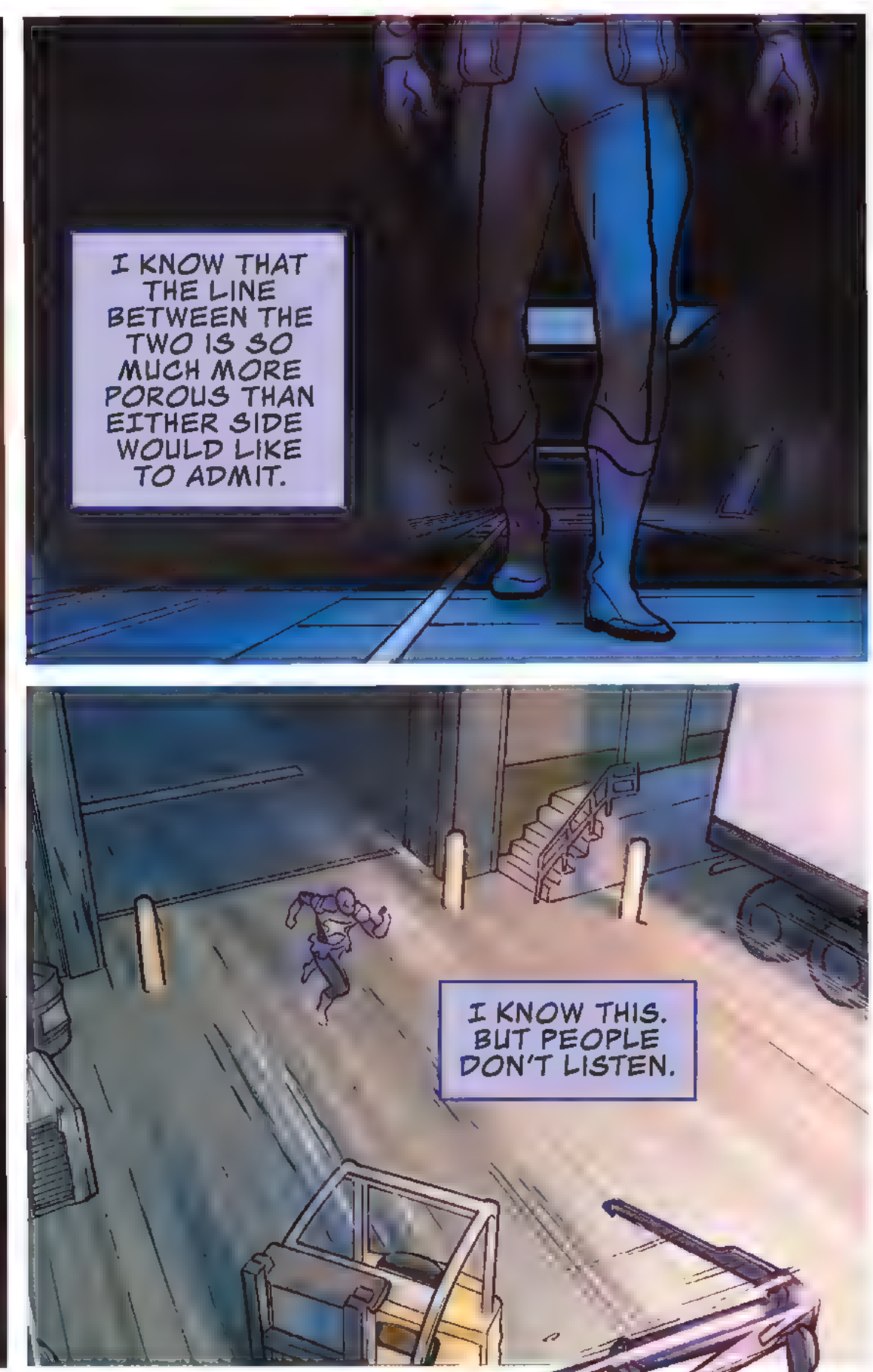
STAY HERE, HOBIE. STAY SAFE.

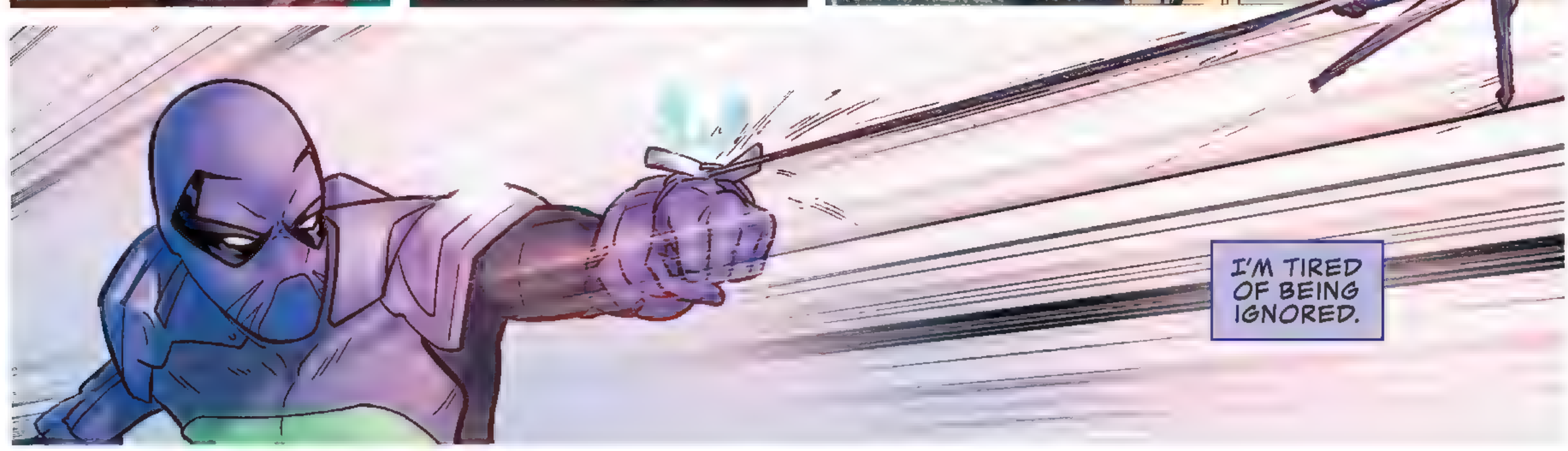
I AM SO TIRED.

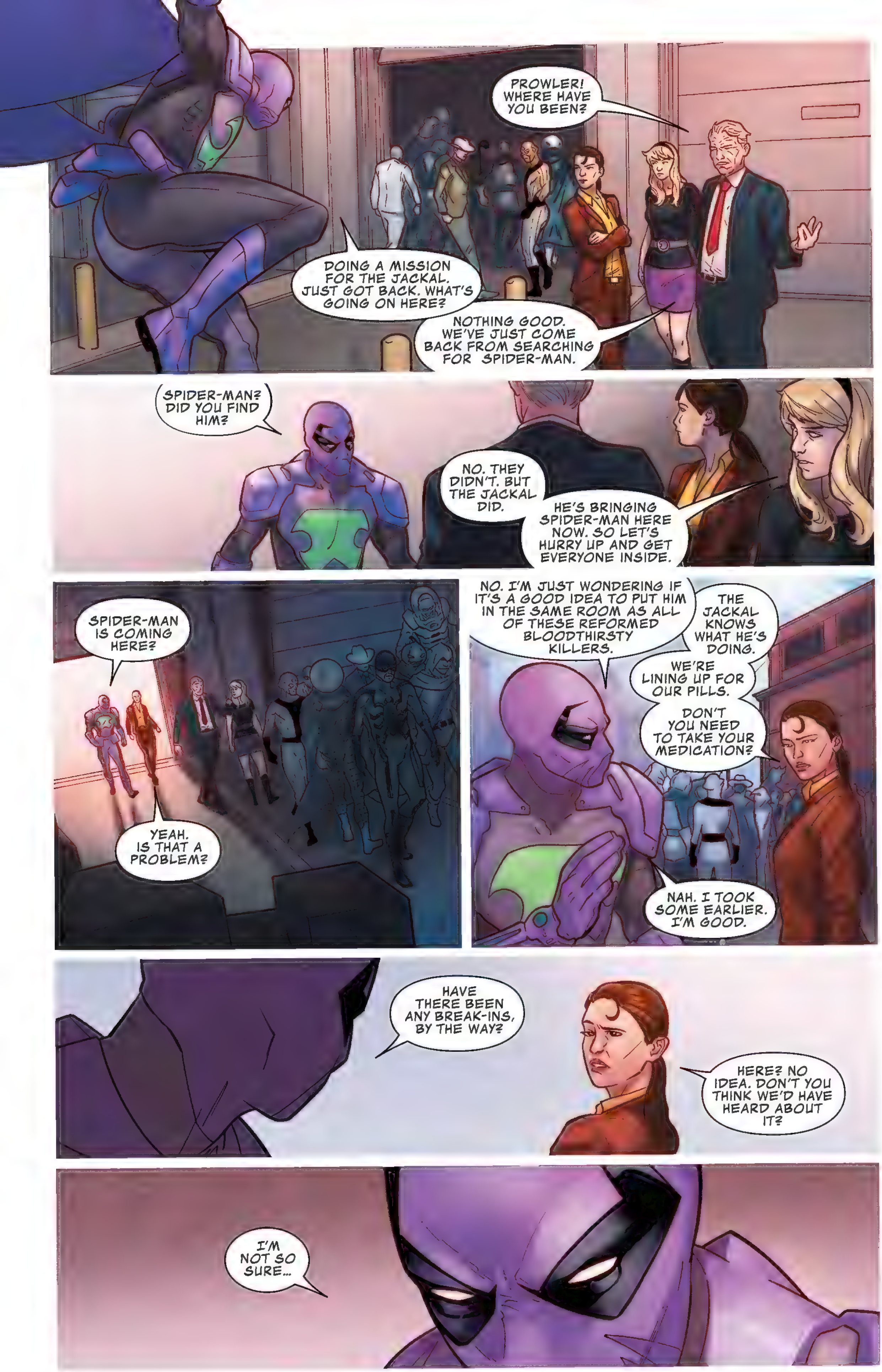
I'M TIRED OF THE CONDESCENSION.

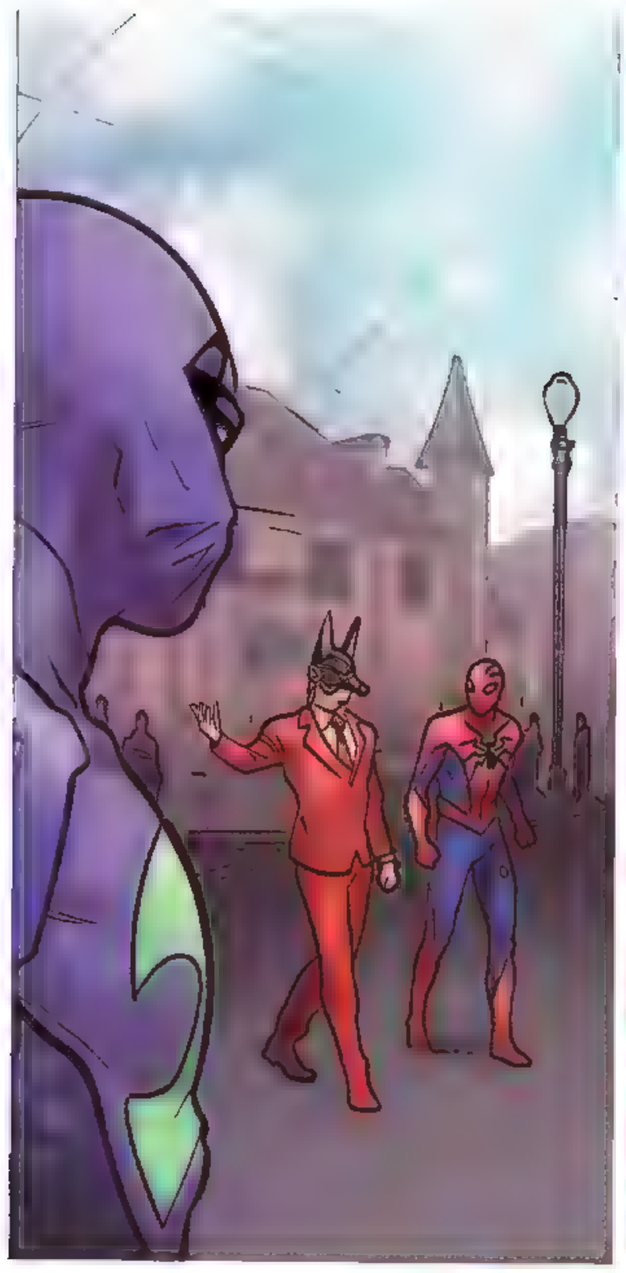
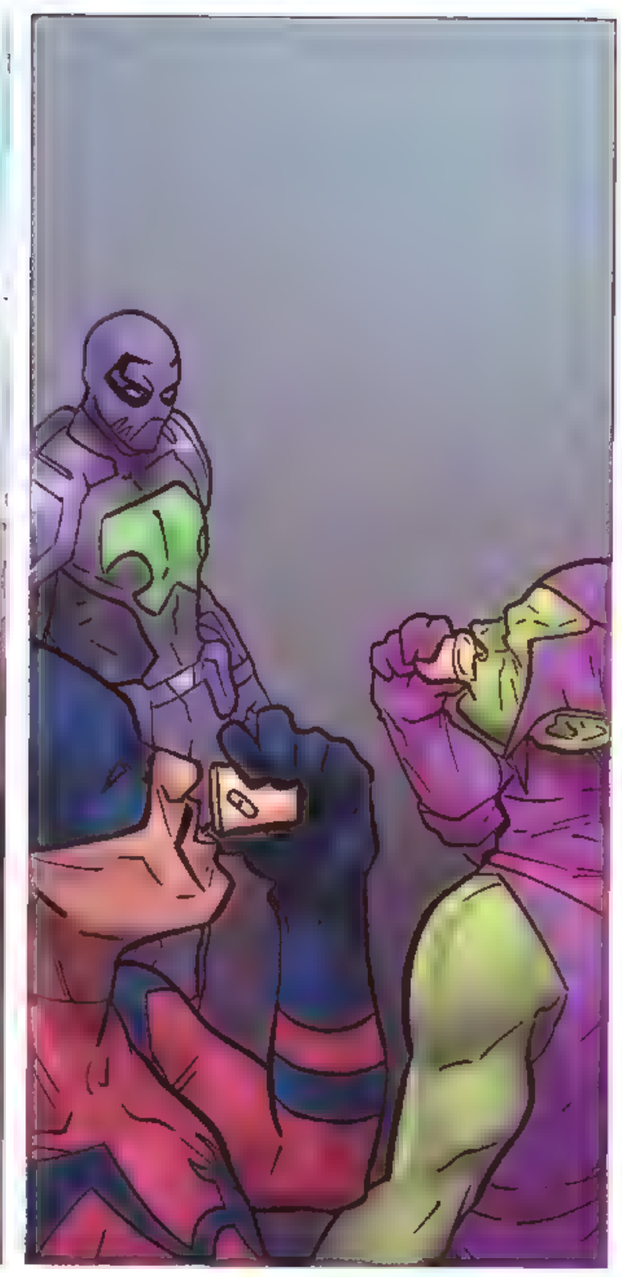
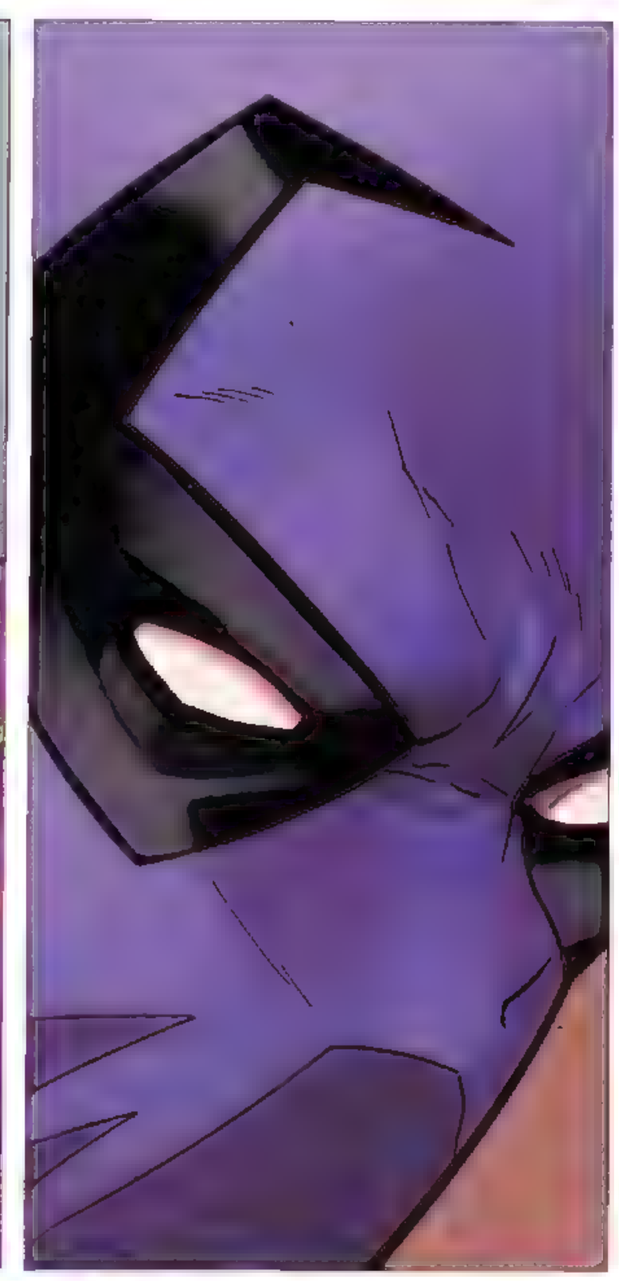
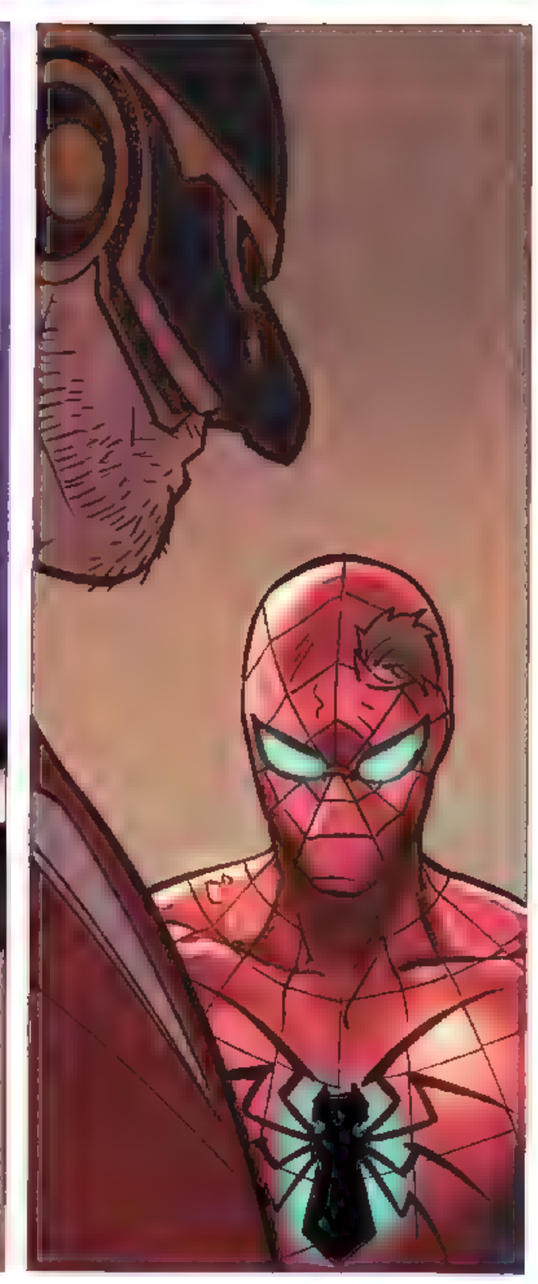
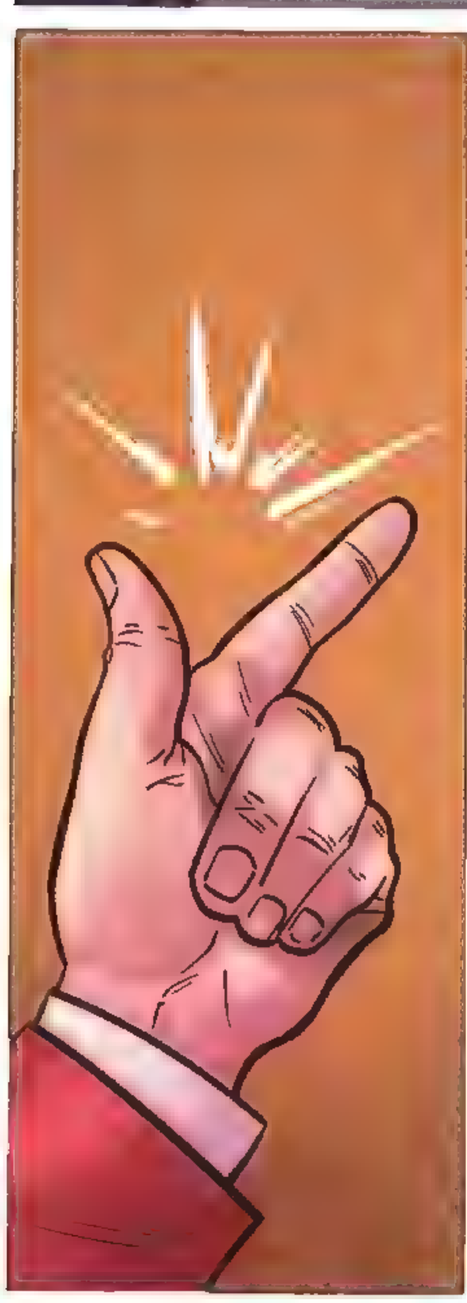
JULIA THINKS SHE'S THE GOOD GUY, THAT THERE'S NO WAY SHE CAN BE WRONG.

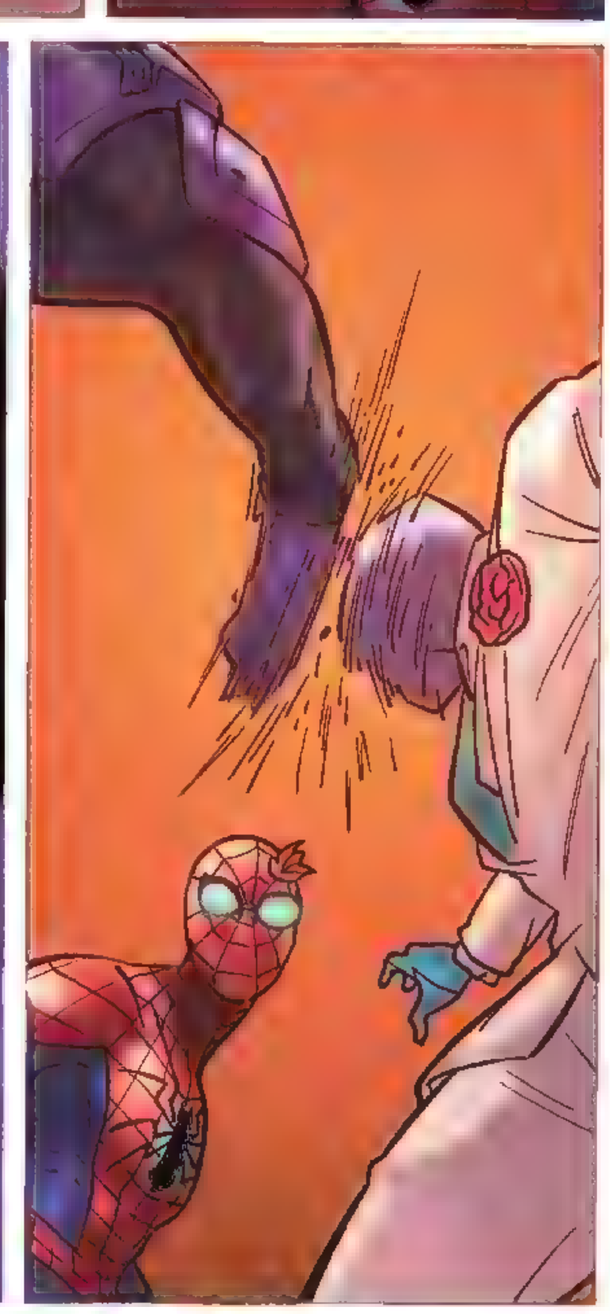
I'VE BEEN CALLED BOTH. GOOD AND BAD.

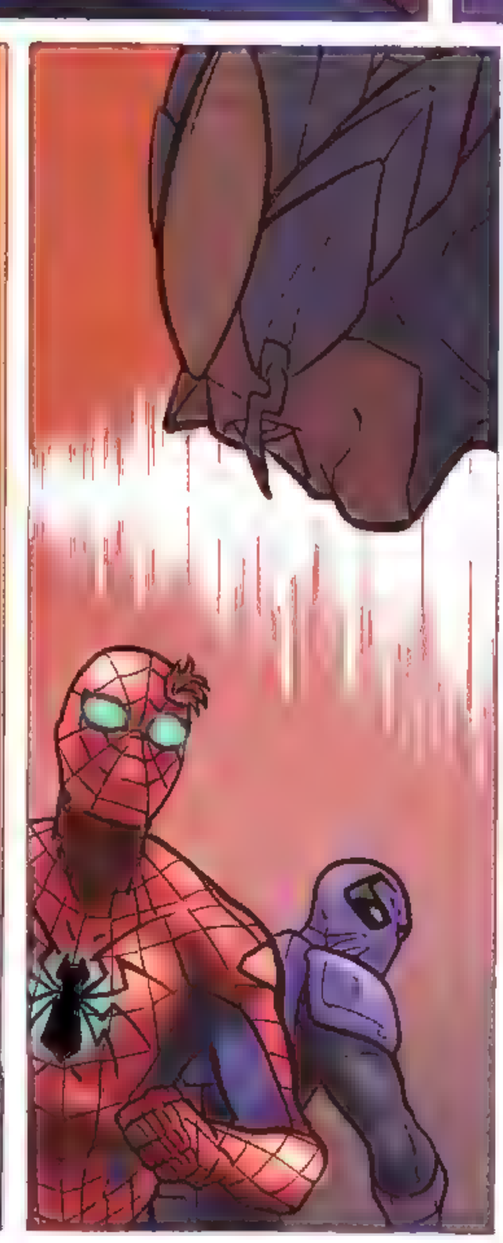
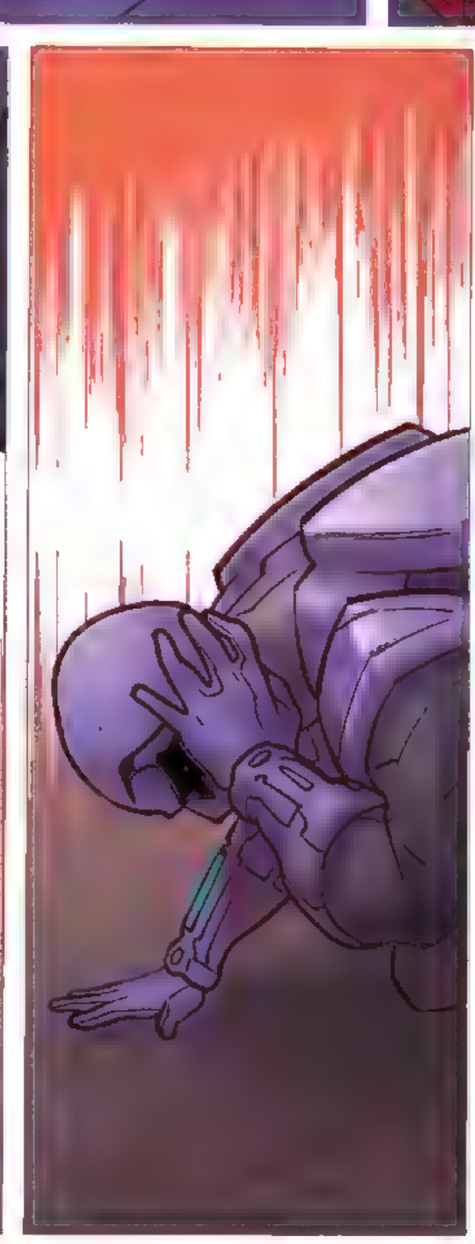

I KNOW THAT THE LINE BETWEEN THE TWO IS SO MUCH MORE POROUS THAN EITHER SIDE WOULD LIKE TO ADMIT.
I KNOW THIS. BUT PEOPLE DON'T LISTEN.


I'M TIRED OF BEING IGNORED.


PROWLER! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
DOING A MISSION FOR THE JACKAL. JUST GOT BACK. WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
NOTHING GOOD. WE'VE JUST COME BACK FROM SEARCHING FOR SPIDER-MAN.
SPIDER-MAN? DID YOU FIND HIM?
NO. THEY DIDN'T. BUT THE JACKAL DID.
HE'S BRINGING SPIDER-MAN HERE NOW. SO LET'S HURRY UP AND GET EVERYONE INSIDE.
SPIDER-MAN IS COMING HERE?
YEAH. IS THAT A PROBLEM?
NO. I'M JUST WONDERING IF IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PUT HIM IN THE SAME ROOM AS ALL OF THESE REFORMED BLOODTHIRSTY KILLERS.
THE JACKAL KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING.
WE'RE LINING UP FOR OUR PILLS.
DON'T YOU NEED TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATION?
NAH. I TOOK SOME EARLIER. I'M GOOD.
HAVE THERE BEEN ANY BREAK-INS, BY THE WAY?
HERE? NO IDEA. DON'T YOU THINK WE'D HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT?
I'M NOT SO SURE...

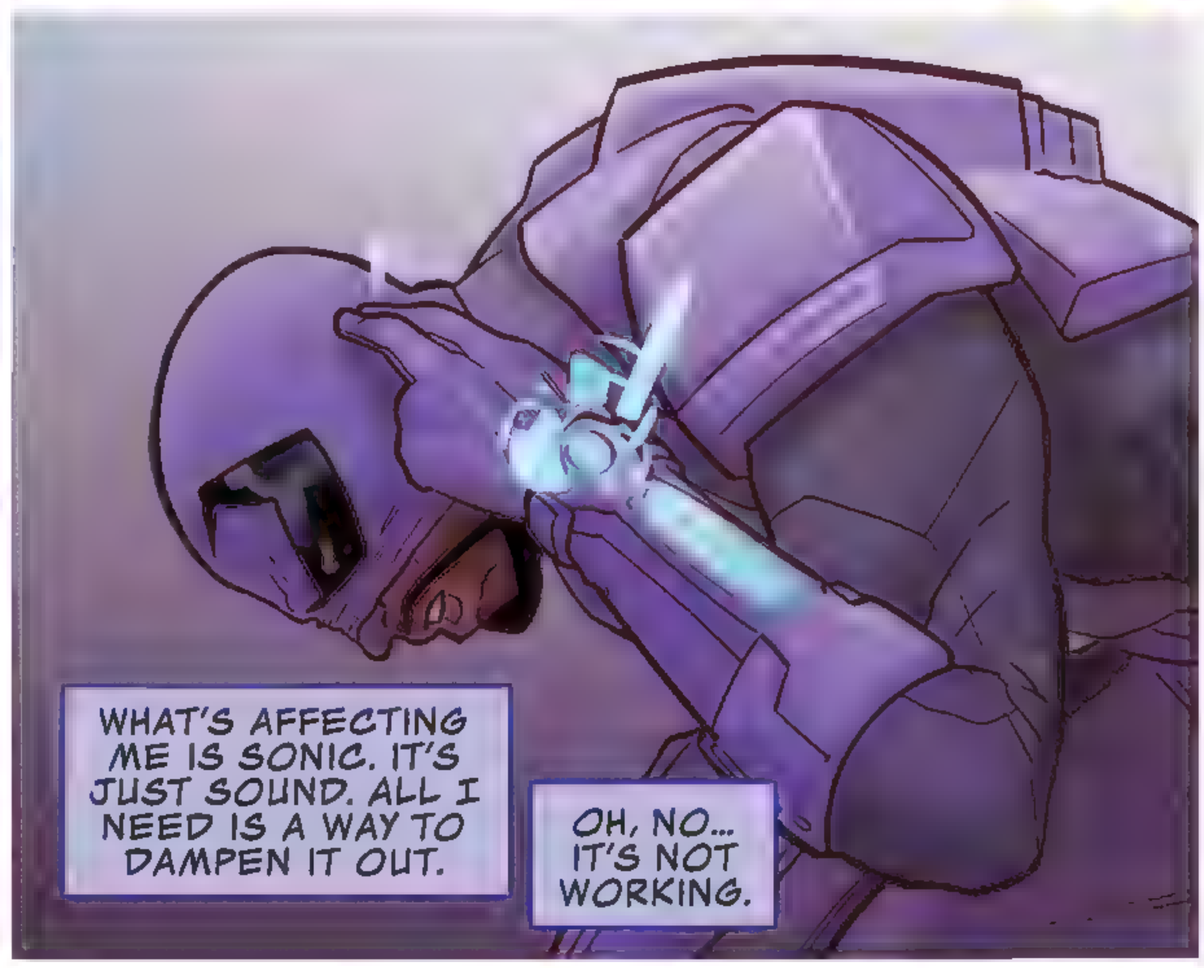






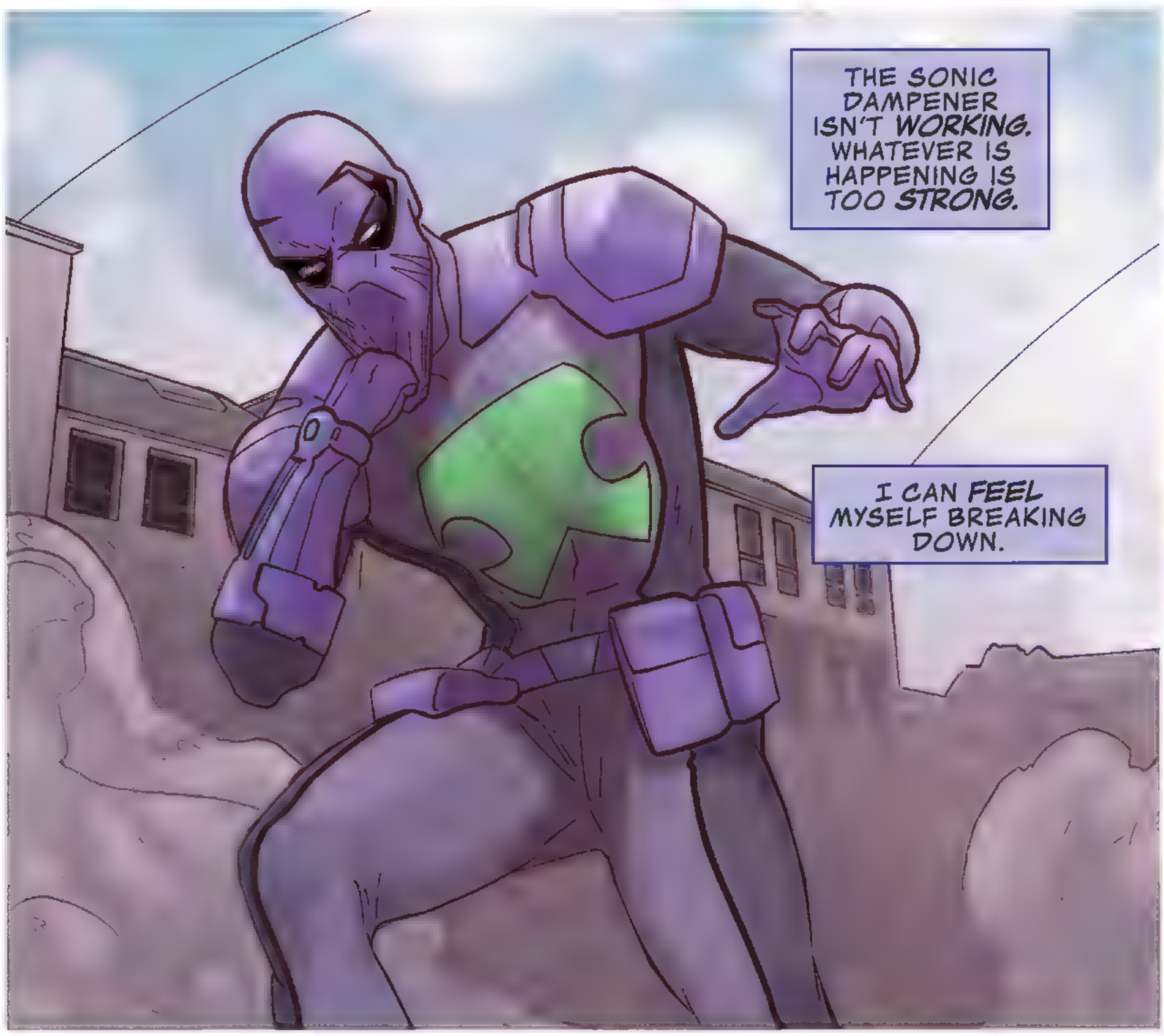


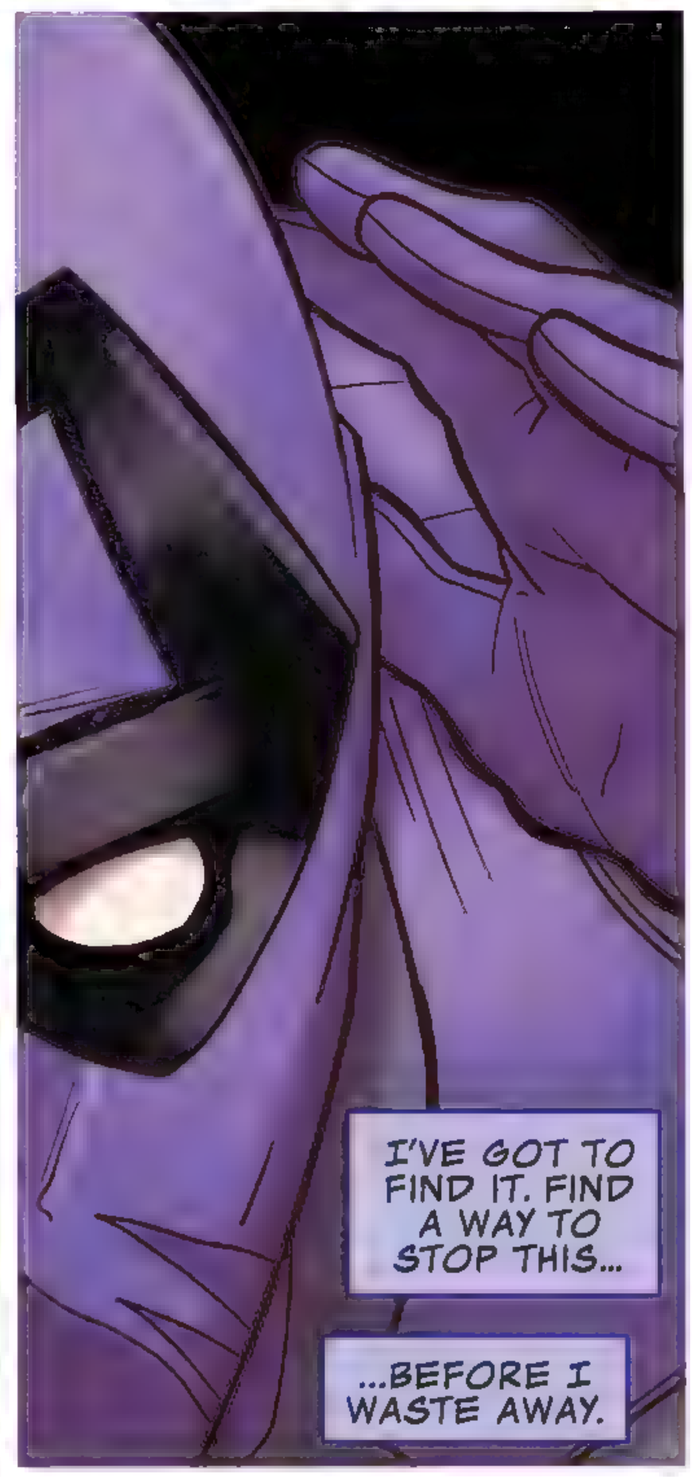



THERE GOES SPIDER-MAN. AS USUAL.
I GET IT, THOUGH. HE'S GOT BIGGER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT THAN ME.

I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.


WHAT'S AFFECTING ME IS SONIC. IT'S JUST SOUND. ALL I NEED IS A WAY TO DAMPEN IT OUT.
OH, NO... IT'S NOT WORKING.

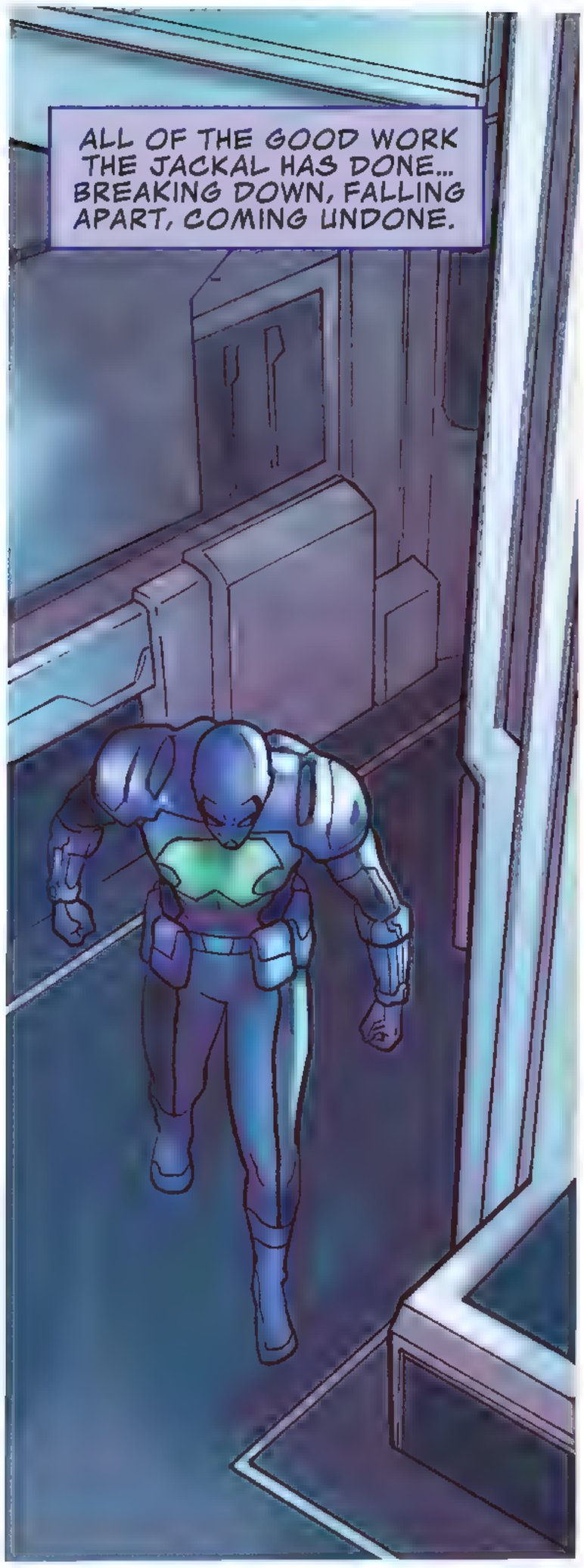

THE SONIC DAMPENER ISN'T *WORKING*. WHATEVER IS HAPPENING IS TOO *STRONG*.
I CAN *FEEL* MYSELF BREAKING DOWN.

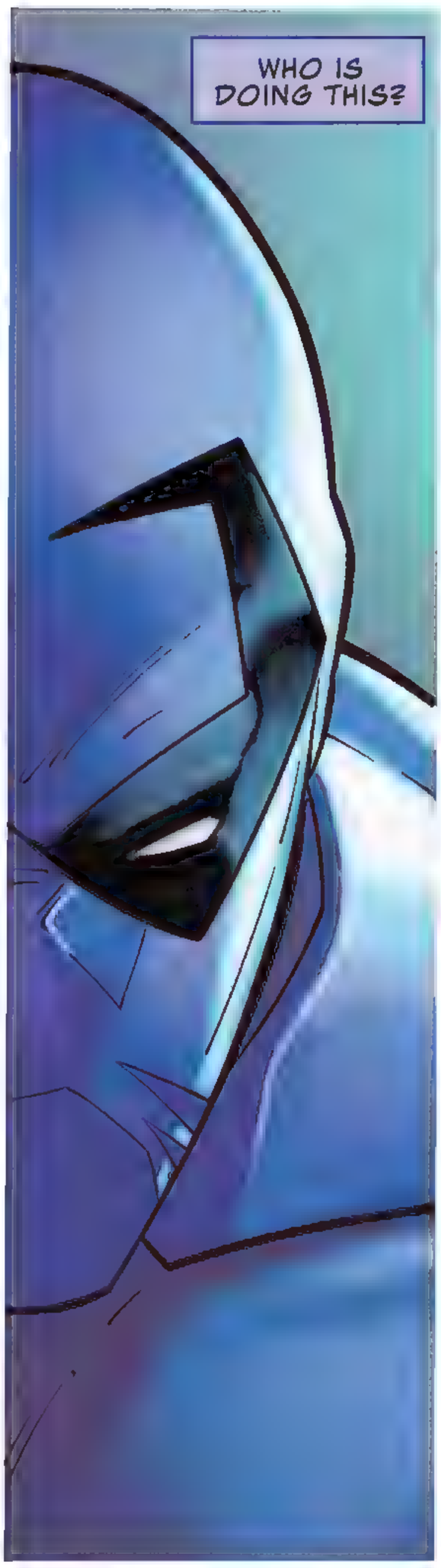

I'VE GOT TO FIND IT. FIND A WAY TO STOP THIS...
...BEFORE I WASTE AWAY.

I'M FIGHTING TO KEEP MYSELF TOGETHER.

AS EVERYONE ELSE FALLS APART.

THIS IS A NIGHTMARE.

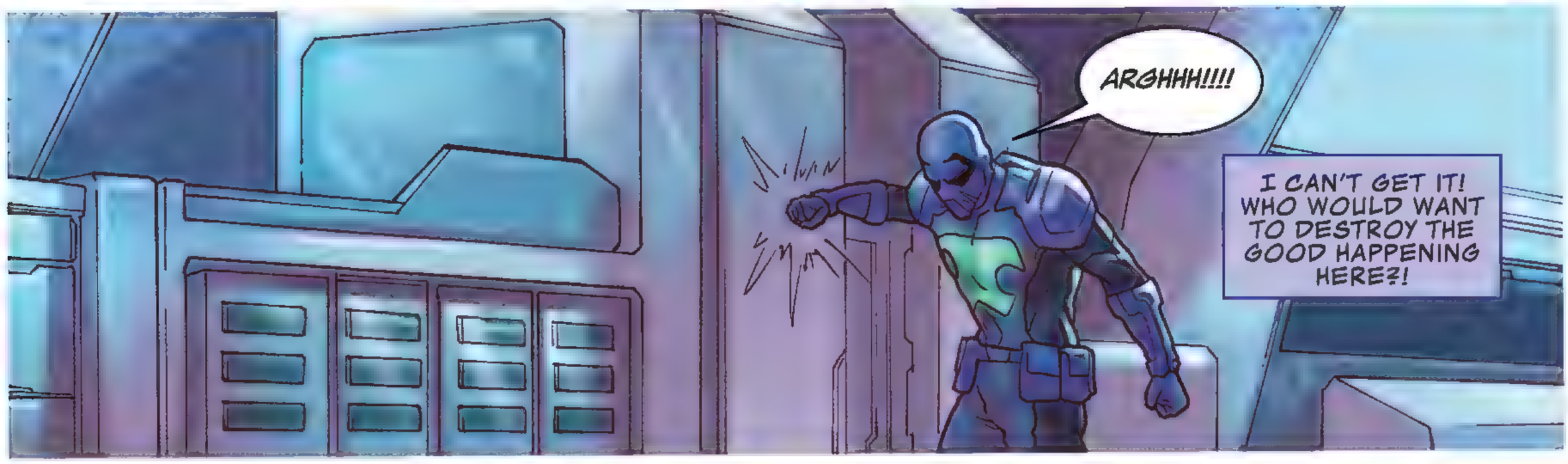

ALL OF THE GOOD WORK THE JACKAL HAS DONE... BREAKING DOWN, FALLING APART, COMING UNDONE.


WHO IS DOING THIS?

IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN SPIDER-MAN. I WAS THERE WITH HIM WHEN THE SONIC BURST STARTED.

JACKAL WOULDN'T DO THIS. WHY WOULD HE?
WHO? WHO? WHO?!

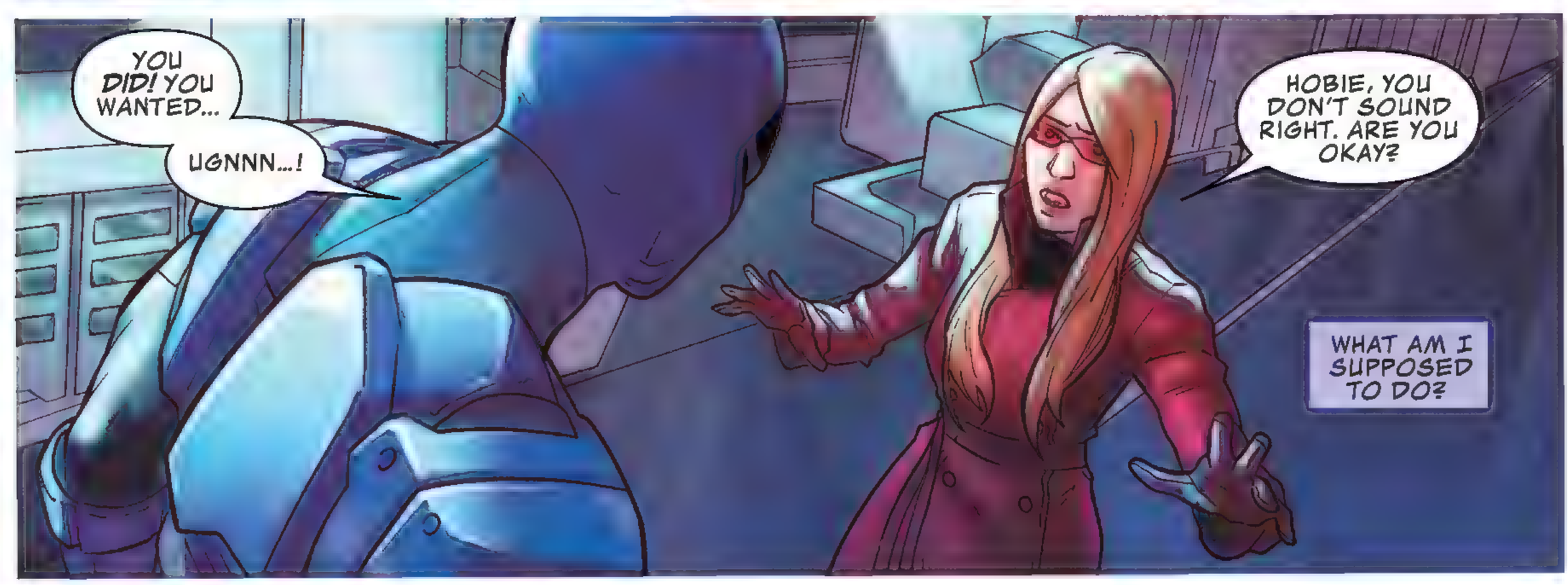
ARGH!!!
MY BRAIN IS ON FIRE.
I CAN'T THINK... I CAN'T...

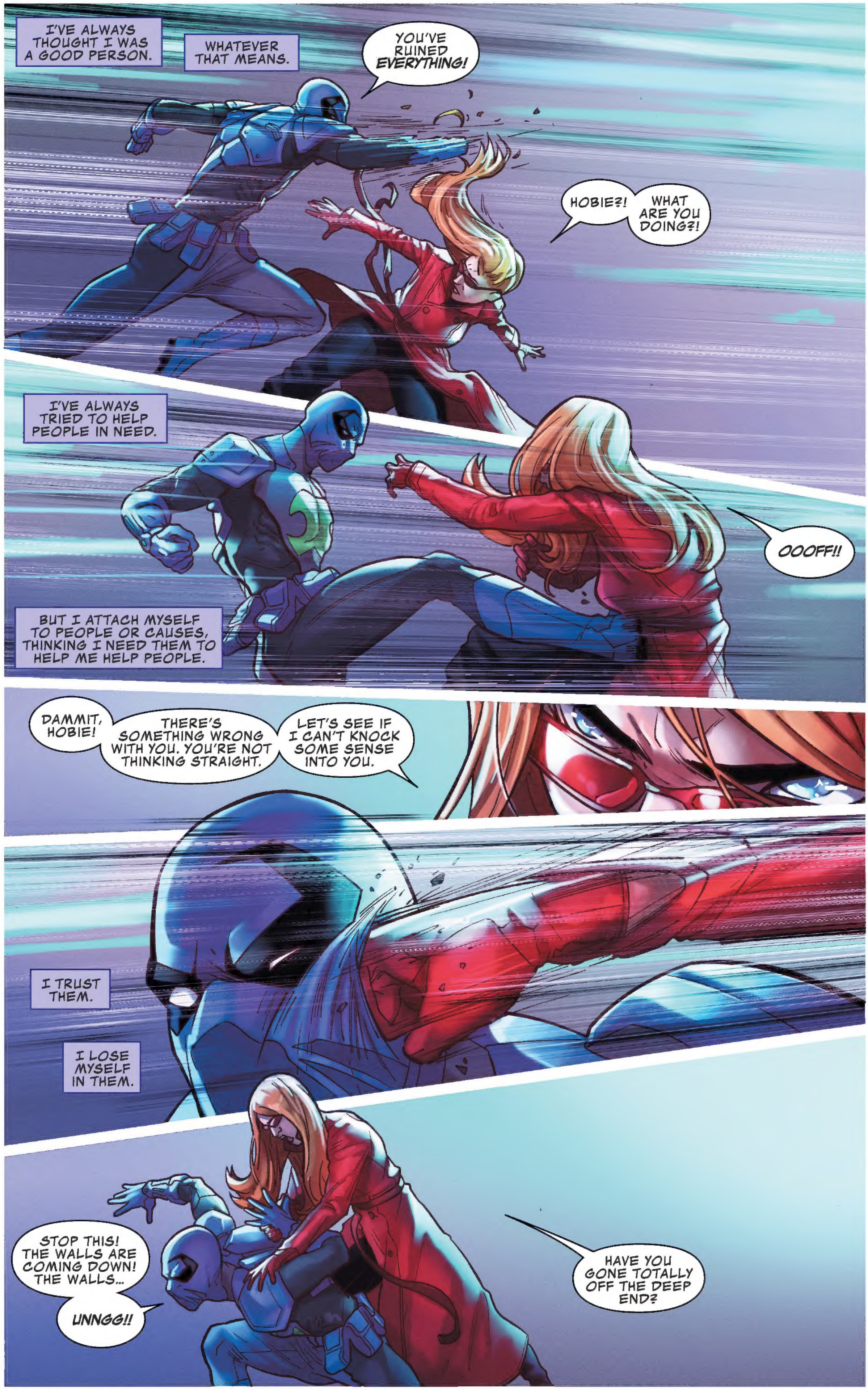

ARGHHH!!!!
I CAN'T GET IT! WHO WOULD WANT TO DESTROY THE GOOD HAPPENING HERE?!

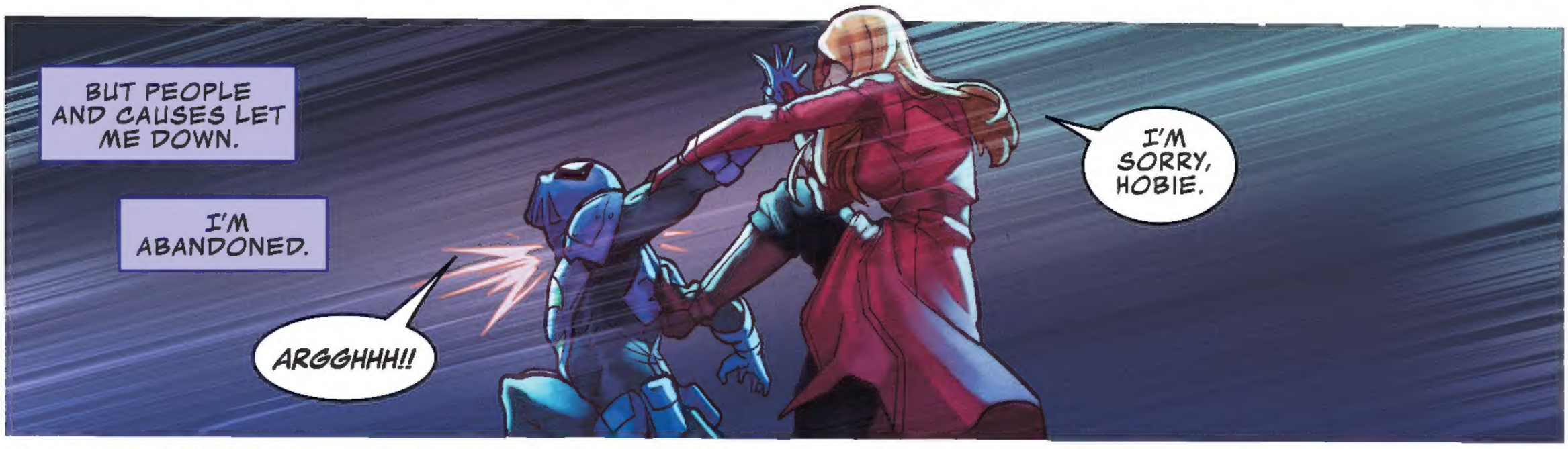
JULIA...
WHAT'S EVEN GOING ON?
HOBIE!! HOBIE!! YOU'RE HERE!!
WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING?!

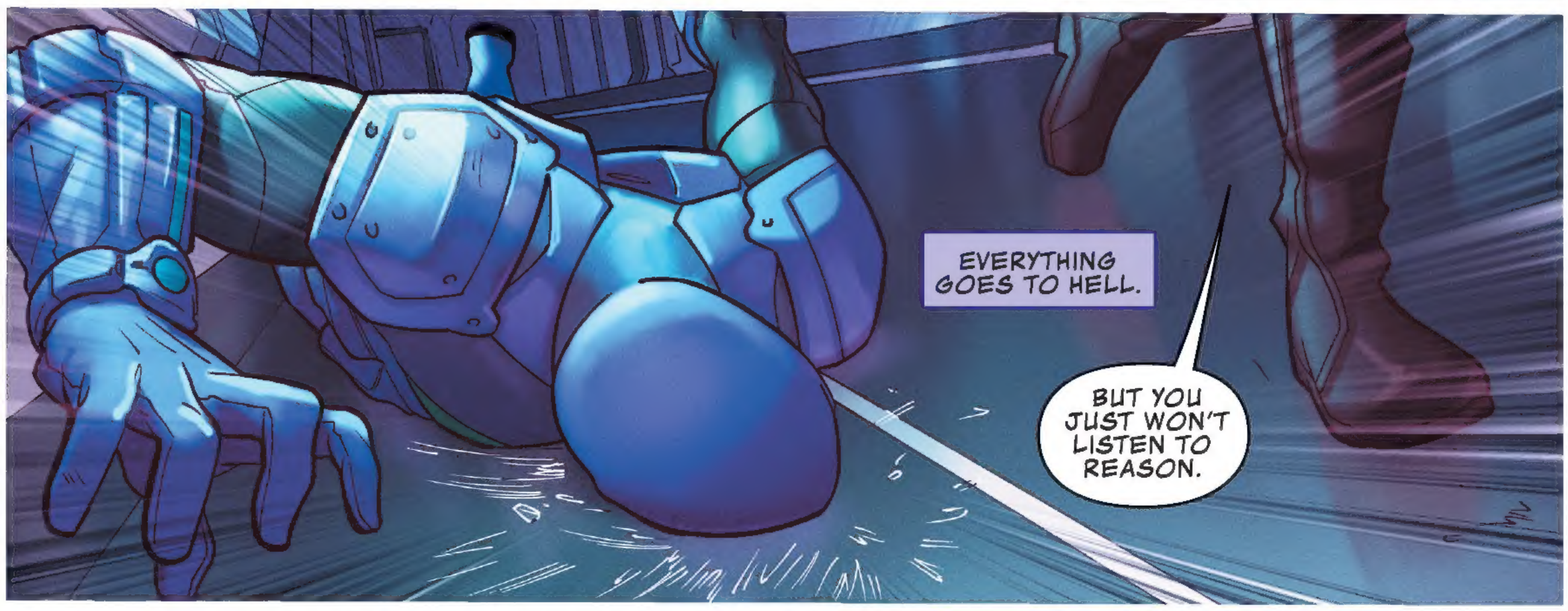
HOBIE? WHAT'S GOING ON?
IS THERE NO ONE I CAN TRUST ANYMORE?
YOU DID THIS. THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THE CLONES ARE BREAKING DOWN. I'M BREAKING DOWN.
THIS IS EVERYTHING YOU WANTED!
I DIDN'T WANT THIS.
YOU PICK A SIDE. BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S THE RIGHT SIDE?


YOU DID! YOU WANTED...
UGNNN...!
HOBIE, YOU DON'T SOUND RIGHT. ARE YOU OKAY?
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?


I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS A GOOD PERSON.
WHATEVER THAT MEANS.
YOU'VE RUINED EVERYTHING!
HOBIE?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO HELP PEOPLE IN NEED.
OOOFF!!
BUT I ATTACH MYSELF TO PEOPLE OR CAUSES, THINKING I NEED THEM TO HELP ME HELP PEOPLE.
DAMMIT, HOBIE!
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU. YOU'RE NOT THINKING STRAIGHT.
LET'S SEE IF I CAN'T KNOCK SOME SENSE INTO YOU.
I TRUST THEM.
I LOSE MYSELF IN THEM.
STOP THIS! THE WALLS ARE COMING DOWN! THE WALLS...
UNNGG!!
HAVE YOU GONE TOTALLY OFF THE DEEP END?





THIS IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.

AND I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT TO PICK UP THE PIECES.

TO BE CONTINUED...

DEAD NO MORE:
THE CLONE CONSPIRACY
DON'T MISS
THE PROWLER
#5

ZONE